

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ROCKLAND, MASSACHUSETTS

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING,
MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2009, 6:30 PM
HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY

The School Committee met on Monday, January 12, 2009 at 6:30 PM at the High School Library. Committee members present were: Mr. Norris, Mrs. Pezzella, Mr. Mills, Mr. Mullen, and Mrs. Werkheiser. Also present were Superintendent Retchless, Assistant Superintendent Scarpelli, Mrs. Cusick and Kelsey Lewis and Patrick Rice, Student Representatives.

Mr. Sangster, High School Principal, Mrs. Cann, Guidance Director; Mr. Haggerty, Middle School teacher; were present in the audience.

Representing the press were citizens broadcasting for WRPS/TV.

Chairman Norris introduced Kelsey Lewis and Patrick Rice, High School Student Representatives.

On motion of Mr. Mills, seconded by Mrs. Pezzella, unanimous, the minutes of the meeting of December 8, 2008 were accepted.

The Superintendent reviewed the upcoming trip to Washington, DC by two teachers and five high school seniors. Donations have been made by the REA, A. W. Perry, and individual members of the community. Congressman Delahunt has provided the group with passes for the inauguration. Mr. Retchless gave the Committee an update of the Energy Grant which totals \$149,750 that is to be used for the three elementary schools. The Town Energy Committee and the school department have also been awarded a grant totaling \$180,000 to be used to install solar panels at the high school. The Superintendent also reported that overall suspensions at the middle school have gone from 132 last year to 64 this year. The staff has been working very hard to address discipline issues within the school. Superintendent Retchless noted that there has been a 23% decrease in the use of electricity as compared to last year.

A request from the Boston University to distribute flyers to the elementary and middle school students and to post at the high school was approved on the recommendation of the Superintendent. Motion by Mr. Mills, seconded by Mr. Mullen, unanimous.

Two requests from the Rockland Memorial Library to distribute flyers to the pre-school, elementary and middle school students were approved on the recommendation of the Superintendent. Motion by Mr. Mills, seconded by Mrs. Pezzella, unanimous.

On four motions by Mr. Mills, seconds by Mr. Mullen, unanimous, the following December Monthly Reports were approved:

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| 1) Administrators | Mr. Sangster, Mr. Stanish,
Mrs. McGrath,
Mr. Kohn/Dr. Levine, Mrs. Sheehan |
| 2) Guidance | Mrs. Cann |
| 3) Nurse | Mrs. Ryan |
| 4) Pupil Personnel Services | Ms. Salem |

On five separate motions by Mr. Mills, seconds by Mrs. Pezzella, unanimous, the following Security Trailer Reports for December were accepted:

- 1) Almshouse
- 2) Esten
- 3) Hartsuff Park
- 4) Jefferson
- 5) Memorial Park

The following January Newsletters were noted:

- 1) Esten
- 2) Jefferson
- 3) Memorial Park
- 4) Middle School

Building Rentals for December were noted.

Mr. Retchless noted that the Middle School Project is moving into the Feasibility Study phase. R. White from the MSBA has stated that the document regarding the Feasibility Study should be sent to the Superintendent within a few days and also the letter approving Dore & Whittier as the architect will also be forwarded. The previous Feasibility Study included a link between the high school and the middle school. It is important that this new study reflect the same information. There will be a special meeting of the Building Committee on Wednesday, January 14th at the Town Hall to review these documents.

The Superintendent noted that the State has ended the Food Service Management Contracts for all schools. A new Food Service Management Contract is being advertised. It consists of two stages; a Cost Proposal and a Qualitative Proposal. When the proposals are submitted, the Wellness Committee will review them. It was suggested that a member of the School Committee be appointed to each of these Committees. It was voted that these appointments would be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

On the recommendation of the Superintendent, it was voted to approve the proposed list of Fund Raisers for January through June 2009. Motion by Mr. Mills, seconded by Mr. Mullen, unanimous. The Committee was pleased with the way the forms were prepared and it was suggested that the form be available on line for uniformity. Mrs. Werkheiser suggested that the date be changed in order that the PACs could compare fund raisers for duplications.

Mr. Scarpelli recommended the transfer of \$16,241.00 from Code 1000 to Code 4000 to update expenditures to cover software upgrades and energy expenses. Motion to approve by Mrs. Pezzella, seconded by Mr. Mills, unanimous.

On the motion by Mr. Mills, seconded by Mrs. Pezzella, unanimous, it was voted to accept a donation of twenty computers from Mr. Michael Ledoux and the Arbella Insurance Company and to send a thank you letter to Mr. Ledoux.

Mrs. Cann, Guidance Director, gave the Committee an overview of the proposed changes to the 2009 RHS Program of Studies. Some of the changes include: April 1st as the deadline for submission to South Shore Voc Tech School, plans for changes to the Bank Training program, Economics added to Business Seminar class, the addition of a one semester Information Literacy course offered through the library to be offered to juniors and seniors. Mr. Mills inquired what would be offered as software in the technology area. On the recommendation of the Superintendent, it was voted to table the approval of the proposed changes until the next meeting. Motion by Mr. Mills, seconded by Mrs. Pezzella, unanimous.

The Superintendent gave an overview of the 2009 Spring Night School Courses including classes such as belly dancing, First Time Home Buyer, and two trips. Again, Mr. Retchless noted that this program is self supporting and is enjoyed by many residents.

Mr. Scarpelli updated the Committee with regard to the savings being realized from telephone providers. There has been a 65% savings as a result of reduced cell phones and a 44% savings in long distance service.

On the recommendation of the Superintendent, it was voted to declare a miscellaneous list of computers and equipment at the Middle School and Memorial Park as surplus. Motion by Mr. Mills, seconded by Mrs. Pezzella, unanimous.

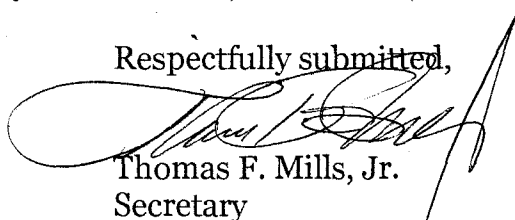
On the recommendation of the Superintendent, it was voted to table the vote to accept the proposed Out-of-District Student Policy until the next meeting. Motion by Mr. Mills, seconded by Mr. Mullen, unanimous.

Superintendent Retchless reviewed the implications of a level funded FY10 Budget. The report included cuts of the closing of Jefferson School, loss of 20-25 teachers, 15-20 administration, specialist support and support positions, and the loss of athletic and arts programs. The implications include: large class sizes, reduction in support for students, Grade 5 moving to the middle school, grade 8 moving to the high school, academic accreditation issues at the high school, and redistricting. The intangibles include: the impact on the Middle School Building Project, enrollment and property values.

Mr. Mullen thanked Representative Delahunt for his donation to the Washington Presidential Inauguration trip. Mr. Norris commended Mr. Retchless for his tireless work on behalf of the school district.

On the motion by Mr. Mills, seconded by Mrs. Pezzella, unanimous, the meeting adjourned at 7:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas F. Mills, Jr.
Secretary